

DIVISION: FORMS: 1 - 1V
AGE GROUP: 12 years.
SERIES: "CURRENT AFFAIRS"
PROGRAMME: (4) " Festivals"

OPR: P

NARR: Hello boys and girls,

I think that we in Guyana are very lucky people. Why? Well, because we have so many festivals. I'm sure you know what a festival is - for you certainly enjoy yourselves when festivals come around. Let's see why we have festivals. - First of all, a festival can be a day or a group of days - when we want to remember something important. Do you remember last term we had the festival of Guyana? And during that whole week we tried to remember the important things that happened in our past - or as we call it our history. ^{Christmas} Some people think of Christmas that way. They say at Christmas time they remember the birth of Christ.

But some people have another reason for celebrating Christmas as a festival. They say that you must have a time of the year set aside specially for enjoying your friends' company - for showing a friendly spirit to everybody - to meet people and have meals with them - and to give presents. These people won't say that Christmas reminds them of anything it's just a time to celebrate friendship.

And there's another kind of ^{festival} friendship. You know that when you have worked hard and you have come to the end of your work - you run outside to play. And when you play and laugh with your friends - you're really celebrating the end of the hard work. You sometimes have festivals at school, don't you? - Plays or parties and they nearly always

/come at the end of.....

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come at the end of the term.

But have you noticed something interesting about a lot of festivals, children? If you really think about them you'll find that most of them are religious festivals.

Christmas is a religious festival, so is Easter. These are largely christian festivals. But we in Guyana are lucky to have ^{people} ~~people~~ belonging to three great religions - the Christian, the Hindu and the Muslim religion. Now if you think back you'll remember that in November last year we celebrated the great Hindu festival of Dipavali - the festival of Lights. On one night there were thousands of little burning wicks in little bowls - and you remember what a pretty sight it made - especially in the country.

Well very soon, Muslims in all parts of Guyana are going to celebrate the Festival of Eid. And among Muslims there will be great rejoicing and feasting. And they'll invite their friends to have meals with them. So let's have a look at the festival of Eid and try to understand what it means. You remember we said that when you've worked very hard and your work is finished, you celebrate the end of the hard work by playing and having fun with your friends. But you know, boys and girls, this isn't only true of hard work, it's also true of something else. Sometimes we give up something we like a lot for a while because we don't want to become too fond of it. We want to see if we have enough will power to do without it. Some Christians do this during Lent - which by the way begins today. They may give up sweets or foods they like. Some fast - that is they don't eat food for a number of hours on certain days. And all this is done to make them tougher people - to help them to do some serious thinking - to give them some discipline -

/a word I'm sure.....

a word I'm sure you're very accustomed to in school. But when the period of sacrifice is over, people feel that they've learnt their lesson and then they make merry or as we've been saying they have a festival.

OPR:

MUSIC BREAK

NARR:

Well, boys and girls, in the Muslim religion there's a time ~~of~~ the year when Muslims are expected to discipline themselves. For one month - thirty days - they have to fast from Sunset to Sunrise. They can take nothing but water during that time. And yet, children, this doesn't mean that they stay at home - away from work or school. Oh no! They go on living as usual - going to work and school just ^{as} if ~~th-~~ they're having their regular meals. | ~~After Sunset they have their dinner and early in the morning when it's still dark they have something to eat.~~ | Muslims call this month of fasting Ramadan. And millions of them all over the world fast during this month. They ~~hav~~ also go to their places of worship everyday if possible. Do you know what a Muslim place of worship is called? I think I hear someone saying a Mosque - and that's quite right. I'm sure you've all seen a mosque - and some of you have been inside. Nowadays, there are some very beautiful concrete ~~misques~~ - with their white domes. And on top of the domes is something. Can you tell me what? Yes, a crescent or a half-moon which has always been the sign of Islam - the religion of the Muslims.

But let's go back to the festival of Eid. When the month of Ramadan is nearly ~~over~~, Muslims begin to look for the new moon. Only when they ~~yy~~ see the new moon will they know that Ramadan is ended and the festival of Eid - day has come. Eid means then that Muslims are celebrating the

/ end of the period.....

end of the period of fasting. There's great rejoicing on that day. It's almost like Christmas. In fact Eid is like a mixing of Easter and Christmas. For Easter is the end of lent and Christmas is a time of giving and entertaining.

So at Eid Muslims go to their Mosque to praise Allah - the Arabic word for God. - And when they return home they entertain their friends and relatives. ~~Muslims go visiting from house to house - they usually visit their fellow Muslims in the district - and have a little to eat at every house.~~

Muslims also send to their mosques food and money for the poor - and the poor people can, like everyone else visit all the Muslims in the area. And you know something

boys and girls, just as people send Christmas Cards, so many Muslims send Eid cards wishing each other Allah's blessing and good fortune. Try and see if you can get hold of one of these cards. You will find it very interesting. It usually has a picture of a Mosque and a bit of Arabic writing - beautifully carved signs which don't ~~in-any-way~~ resemble our Western writing in any way. For you know, boys and girls, the language of the Muslim Religion is Arabic, ~~Islam started~~ in Arabia; ~~that great sandy Peninsula east of Africa.~~ And all over the world Muslims pray in Arabic and call each other to prayer in Arabic.

And another interesting thing boys and girls, if you got an Eid Card and you could read the Arabic, you would read it not from left to right as you read your school books, but from right to left.

Well, someday this week is Eid day. We don't know exactly when it is yet, but as soon as someone has seen the new moon they will announce the festival. Then muslims in many countries will begin the celebration - countries like Pakistan, Arabia, Egypt, Nigeria, Zanzibar, ^AMelaya, Trinidad and of course our own Guyana. Muslims men

will put on their Kurtas - long white shirts and wear little velvet caps called Fez, and many Muslims women will wear their beautifully embroidered trousers and long white- shirts.

You remember we said that in Guyana we're lucky? Well on Eid day you will see why. You'll see many Guyanese who are not muslims joining in the celebrations of the festival and greating their Muslim friends with good wishes for the future. And then when Easter comes around muslims, Christians and everyone of us will enjoy the Easter week end. Soon Pagwah - the Hindu festival will be here and many people who are not Hindus will be invited to Hindu homes.

So you see how many festivals we have. Some countries of the world have only one set of festivals to celebrate. But in Guyana we have festivals that people from Europe celebrate, ~~festivals to celebrate,~~ But-in-Guyana-we festivals that the people of Asia and Africa ~~also~~ celebrate. So we should be proud of our festivals which link so many people in different parts of the world.

So long children, until next week.

OPR

PLAY THEME.